



April 10, 2007

Dear Bishops,

Greetings to you in this season of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This letter is an expression of grave concern that the motions recently proposed by the Council of General Synod for debate at this summer's meeting will lead us to exclusion from the worldwide Anglican Communion. The Primates, in their Dar es Salaam Communiqué, clearly request that The Episcopal Church and, by implication, the Anglican Church of Canada reaffirm Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference as the teaching of the Communion on human sexuality and also that the necessary assurance is made that we will not authorize the blessing of same-sex unions. It is clear to us that unless you, as a House, call us back from the edge we will lose our place as a full member of the Communion that we hold dear. If that does not happen it appears likely that the following events will unfold:

1. If motions 3-5 are passed, it will be understood that the Anglican Church of Canada has chosen to "walk apart" from Canterbury and the International Communion. "Communion" (koinonia) is not a human creation but a gift of the Holy Spirit. We know that living in "communion" is difficult but it does require us to make decisions in mutual submission and in an ordered way. The willingness to settle the issue of same sex blessing as Communion members does not appear to have a place in these motions. If we will not make clear our willingness to remain within the Communion it will be determined that we have walked away from it.
2. If these motions are passed we will be on our way to changing the Marriage Canon. Changing the Marriage Canon to include all those legally eligible to marry will, as mentioned above, result in our walking apart from the Communion. Also, it will result in our departure from the received teaching of the Church through the ages and from our current fellowship with other denominations. It is not within our authority to make this change on behalf of the Christian Church.
3. If the motion for 'local option' returns to the floor and is passed, our Church will be ministering in contradiction and division. Firstly, the unrecognized fact is that a vote for local option will declare that God does in fact bless same sex unions. We cannot say in one church God blesses such unions but in the church down the street that God does not. The contradiction is

illogical and unworkable. Secondly, 'local option' will plunge the Anglican Church of Canada into an extended period of the most painful and diversionary turmoil. At every level of church life – national, diocesan and parish – votes will be forced which will divide God's people and bring discredit to the cause of Christ in the world.

4. If resolutions 3-5 put forward by CoGS FAIL to pass, we are left in almost as much danger. UNLESS General Synod has the opportunity to debate and vote on one or more clear motions in SUPPORT of the Primates specific requests in Windsor, and again in the Dar es Salaam Communiqué, simply defeating the CoGS motions produces nothing more than continued confusion, debate and uncertainty. The Primates have explicitly requested clarity and may interpret continued ambiguity as a choice to walk apart. General Synod delegates deserve a clear unambiguous choice: to walk with the Communion or to walk apart. "Choose this day."

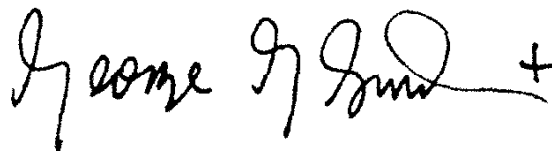
We urge you to hold fast to the advice that you gave to General Synod at your House of Bishops' meeting on October 26, 2006 that the Marriage Canon should not be revised. We also ask that you would bring to the floor of Synod a motion clearly affirming those marker points of Communion as set out by the Primates' Dar es Salaam Communiqué. This will clearly assert our desire to walk in communion with Canterbury and the worldwide Anglican Church as opposed to "walking apart" from it.

We understand the matters before us as a Church are complex but we fear that the recent set of resolutions proposed by the Council of General Synod for debate constitutes an adventure in ecclesial brinkmanship. We acknowledge the heaviness of the responsibility which God has placed upon your shoulders and we assure you of our prayers as you work to preserve the unity and integrity of the Communion which has been entrusted to you.

Yours in witness to our risen Lord Jesus Christ,



The Rev'd Canon John Paul Westin
Co-Chair, Anglican Essentials Canada
Chair, Anglican Essentials Federation



The Rev'd George Sinclair
Co-Chair, Anglican Essentials Canada
Chair, Anglican Network in Canada